8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

obtaining water in spring. At that season the water from melting snows collected in many depressions which dried out by summer time.

When the Indians had to cross deep streams or rivers on the march, they rolled up the sides of their lodge covers to form rude boats in which baggage and children were placed. Horse travois poles and tipi poles were lashed together to form crude rafts on which other baggage was ferried. Horses towed these improvised craft while men swam ahead with tow lines, guiding the way, and women pushed from behind. Horses whinnied, dogs yelped, and people shouted as the crossing was made. When the Indians reached the far side of the stream, they generally stopped for the day to dry their clothes and gear.

On a rainy morning the Indians usually did not try to move camp. If a heavy rain fell while the band was on the march, they generally stopped for the day. Other factors helped to determine both the speed of movement and the distance covered. Among them were the character of the terrain traversed (whether level or hilly, the number and sizes of the water courses to be crossed), the availability of game, fear of enemy raiding parties in the vicinity, and the desire to reach a trading post or a particular camping spot before nightfall.

A normal day's march was about ten to fifteen miles. This was fully twice the distance the prehistoric ancestors of the Blackfeet could have made on foot carrying their meager possessions on dog travois and the backs of their women. A horse packing two hundred pounds on its back or hauling three hundred pounds on the travois could move four times the load of a heavily burdened dog twice as far on a day's march. So, animal for animal, the horse was eight times more efficient than the dog as a burden bearer. The application of horse power to camp movement thus enabled the Blackfeet to accumulate more property and to move it faster and farther as well.

An average family of eight persons (including two grown males, three women, and three children) needed ten horses to move camp efficiently. They needed a horse to carry the lodge

9: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1955 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

726 at the hands of the Blackfoot as a result of neglect of adequate scouting precautions (Denig, 1953, p. 48).[86]

THE NOON STOP FOR LUNCH

484 264 On days when camp was to move the Blackfoot usually were up at dawn, packed, and on the march before 8 o'clock. They breakfasted before getting underway. At noon the chief called a stop for a short rest and lunch. Lunch generally was not a cooked meal but consisted of prepared meat, pemmican, or dried plant foods carried in rawhide cases by the women, suspended from the horns of their saddles. If possible, the stop was made near water. Otherwise drinking water was carried along in paunch containers. The flanking guard parties carried their own lunches and stopped to eat, holding their repective positions in relation to the main body. However, it was customary for the leader of each guard group to ride in to the main body to consult with the chief during the noon stop.[84]

CROSSING STREAMS EN ROUTE

505 [501] Blackfoot bands carried no bull boats or other watercraft for use in crossing rivers and deep streams while on the march. In the 1870's Bradley (1923, p. 257) described their method of crossing streams:

> . . . they made a kind of float from the skin covering of the lodges, upon or within which their effects were placed, men, women, and children swimming, the warriors towing the floats by a cord held in the mouth. Such horses as were fit for that service were also made to do duty in transporting their riders. By these means a village of 500 lodges would cross a considerable stream within an hour's time.

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[711] [86] The guarding of a moving camp by advance scouts, side pickets, and rear guard seems to have antedated the acquisition of horses by the northern Plains tribes. La Vérendrye wrote of the formation employed by the horseless Assiniboin with whom he journeyed to the Mandan villages in 1738, "The marching order of the Assiniboin villagers, especially when they are numerous, is in three columns, the scouts in front, the wings (extending back) to a good rearguard; the old and disabled march in the main body which is in the middle" (La Vérendrye, 1927, p. 317). The elder Henry's description of an Assiniboin movement in 1776, involving a camp of about 200 lodges and over 500 dog travois, however, makes no mention of side pickets (Henry, 1809, p. 309). Laroeque's earliest description of the Crow (1805) mentioned their employment of advance scouts and rear guard, but no side pickets. Possibly the use of flanking pickets became more necessary after the introduction of horses increased the mobility of potential attackers. In earlier times, when enemies of necessity approached more slowly on foot, there may have been less need for flank protection. Nevertheless, flankers were employed to protect large camps on the move, even in La Vérendrye's time.

In the 19th century, use of side, advance, and rear guards was common to both nomadic and horticultural Plains tribes as well as to the Plateau peoples when moving camp on buffalo-hunting expeditions. The younger Henry (Henry and Thompson, 1897, vol. 1, pp. 389, 393) noted that the Hidatsa-Mandan employed this formation en route to and returning from their visit to the Cheyenne in the summer of 1806. This formation has also been reported as characteristic of the Crow (Marquis, 1928, p. 144), Pawnee (Dunbar, 1880, p. 528), Osage (Tixier, 1940, p. 166), Kiowa (Battey, 1875, pp. 185–186), and Flathead (Turney-High, 1937, p. 117).

[711] [84] Laroeque's excellent description of Crow camp movement in 1805, points out that the Crow usually made a midday stop for lunch (Laroeque, 1910).

9: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1955 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

Informants added details to this description by stating that the lodge covers were rolled up at the sides, baggage and children placed in them, and the women swam along behind pushing the covers while men towed them from in front by ropes. The lodgepoles were placed under the travois and bound to them to form crude rafts on which backrests and other luggage were transported over the water. Horses towed these improvised rafts. Crossing a wide river, such as the Missouri, provided the Indians a noisy time. Horses whinnied, dogs yelped, people shouted. When the camp safely reached the other side its members generally stopped for the day to dry their clothes and gear and to feast. In the absence of any contemporary drawing of Blackfoot methods of stream crossing I have reproduced Sohon's original sketch of Flathead Indians traversing a stream as plate 10. The Flathead method was essentially the same as that employed by the Blackfoot.[56]

The problem of management of horses in water must have confronted the Indians soon after they acquired their first horses. Hendry (1907, p. 351) observed that the "Archithinue" of the Saskatchewan Plains were adept in the employment of horses in "swimming broad and deep rivers," in 1755. Yet Weasel Tail stated that in his youth a man was careful to choose a horse known to behave well in water, if he attempted to ride across a stream. Otherwise he preferred to swim or to let his horse tow him across by holding on to the animal's tail. Kane (1925, p. 76) observed this method of river crossing employed by Blackfoot in 1848.[56]

STOPS EN ROUTE BECAUSE OF RAIN

If the moving camp was overtaken by a hard, sudden rainstorm en route, they sought shelter in brush if any was near, built makeshift shelters of a few bent willow branches in the generalized sweat-lodge pattern, covered them with buffalo robes, and remained inside until the storm moved on. If, however, the rain continued through the day they would be forced to set up their lodges at or near that place.

ARRIVAL AT NIGHT CAMP

Usually the site for the night's camp was determined in advance by the band chief on the basis of its known distance from the previous

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[56] Father Mengarini (1938, pp. 16–17), and Major Owen (1927, vol. 1, p. 37) described Flathead methods of crossing streams as employed in the mid-19th century. Mandelbaum (1940, p. 196) found that Plains Cree horses were trained to pull "rafts" tied to their tails, but he did not describe the rafts. Lowie (1922 a, p. 219) said the Crow made rafts of parallel tipi poles, spread hides over them, and placed the cargo on top.

[56] In 1806 the younger Henry (Henry and Thompson, 1897, vol. 1, p. 331) observed Mandan young men swimming horses across the Missouri. "They fastened a line to the horse's mouth, the end of which one of them took in his teeth, and swam ahead, whilst others swam on each side and in the rear, driving the animal very expeditiously."

A [See category 171, p. 358-I--Analyst]